

Manhattan Project truck unearthed at landfill cleanup site

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Remnants of a 1940s military truck buried in a Manhattan Project-era landfill

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, April 8, 2011—A Los Alamos National Laboratory excavation crew working on a Recovery Act cleanup project has uncovered the remnants of a 1940s military truck buried in a Manhattan Project-era landfill. The truck was unearthed inside a sealed building where digging is taking place at Material Disposal Area B, LANL's first hazardous and radioactive waste landfill. MDA B was used from 1944 to 1948. Barely recognizable

The rusting hulk is believed to be a Chevrolet military truck, built in 1942 or 1943. It's barely recognizable, but a fender, an inline six-cylinder engine block, a steering column, and part of the cab are visible. The truck bed is missing—either still in the trench, or cut off prior to disposal. According to persistent Lab legend, a truck from the first atomic

bomb test near Alamogordo, New Mexico was driven back to Los Alamos and buried at MDA B. LANL officials say it could also be a truck that went from building to building, collecting trash from Manhattan Project labs. "We may never know what the truck we found was used for," said Bruce Schappell, LANL's deputy associate director for Environmental Programs. "It's in pretty bad shape." The truck will be crushed, packaged in a waste bin, and sent to a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. Manhattan Project trash

The six-acre site along DP Road in Los Alamos contains a series of trenches used to dispose of hazardous and non-hazardous trash from Manhattan Project labs and buildings. Excavation began in July, 2010 and is expected to complete by July of 2011. The trenches will be filled with clean soil and the site will be made available for property transfer. The project is funded by \$110 million from the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Los Alamos National Laboratory

www.lanl.gov

(505) 667-7000

Los Alamos, NM

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